

Hugo Bell

Passhyon Agan Arloedh

For Soprano, Mezzo, 2 Violins & Organ

2026

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5½ minutes

Instrumentation

- Soprano
 - Mezzo-soprano
 - Violin
 - Violin
 - Pipe Organ
-

Ragov na hwilewgh oela
Ha ganso kyn fes tewlys
Ow ri ty a vynn dre dha vay a reth mar hweg
Fest yn tynn hi a oela
Payn a'n jeva, angus tynn ha galarow
Ha'y dagrow a dhevera a'y dewlagas pur dhehwans
Dowr ha goes yn kemmyskys
Ha'y holonn hweg a ranna my a lever, rag tristans
Yn kettella an nansow hwi a bys rag 'gas kudha
Delirv vy
Yntra dhe dhiwla
An karadow

*Seek not to weep for me
Though you are cast down
By your kiss, so sweetly given
She wept very bitterly
Pain, cruel anguish and suffering
The tears flowed freely from her eyes
Blood and water mixed together
Her sweet heart would have broken for sadness
As you will beg the valleys to cover you
Deliver me
Into your hands
The beloved*

Excerpts from "Passhyon Agan Arloedh"
Anonymous, 14th Century Cornish Poem

Commentary

Passhyon Agan Arloedh (*The Passion of Our Lord*) is a setting of the 259-verse, fourteenth-century Cornish poem of the same name, which recounts the story of Christ's crucifixion. The text is the oldest complete surviving literary work written in Cornish, and represents a pivotal moment in the language's history, marking its transition from oral to written tradition.

The piece uses the modernised Kernewek Kemmyn (*Common Cornish*) version of the text alongside an English translation. Cornish lyrics are indicated in bold throughout the score to distinguish them from the English. Structurally, the work is arranged as a triptych, with a contrasting central section.



Performance Instructions

Interpretation

The piece was composed specifically for the acoustics of St Endellion Church, which is relatively dry and intimate. Performers should pay close attention to dynamics and textural balance throughout. The overall character is soft and restrained - dynamics should be approached in relation to the performance acoustic rather than treated as fixed amplitudes.

The score is almost entirely notated in 4/4 to facilitate reading and coordination between uncondacted parts, but the music should not feel metrically rigid or overemphasise downbeats. A continuous sense of flow should be maintained, especially in the first and third sections.

Notation

- ***n*** is used in lieu of "niente"
-  All string harmonics indicate playing position not sounding pitch
-  Tremolos with three feathers should always be unmeasured and as fast as possible

Singers

The two vocal parts are interwoven throughout the work, with neither taking precedence except when indicated by dynamics, such as in bars 30-51. Singers should allow space within the texture, following dynamic markings closely and dovetailing with one another.

The text is layered and fragmented, conveying an impressionistic rather than literal meaning. Performers should focus on interpreting isolated words or phrases rather than presenting a continuous, linear narrative. A guide to Cornish pronunciation is provided, using simplified English phonetic comparisons rather than IPA.

Violins

Both violins serve primarily as accompaniment. In the first (bars 1-29) and third (bars 77-end) sections they should blend seamlessly with the ensemble and provide subtle rhythmic momentum, whilst the middle section requires a wide range of juxtaposing timbres. Mutes may be required in some passages depending on balance needs.

Organ

The organ part was written specifically for the organ at St Endellion, a small two-manual mechanical-action instrument. Registration changes and manual allocations are shown in boxed text and follow standard conventions.

The position of the swell box is indicated as a percentage, with 0% fully closed and 100% fully open. Performers should use musical discretion for swell registration and box position to achieve the best balance between parts.

The Stopped Diapason on the Great manual should be **partially-drawn to a precise position 65mm** from the jamb to the collar of the stop knob for the duration of the piece. This provides microtonal and textural effects at various point in the piece as shown below:

Sounding (approximate)

Written / Played

(airy cluster)

mp

pppp

Gt: S.D 8' at 65mm

Demonstration: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wZ9kwKOFsul>

Cornish Pronunciation Guide

Cornish (KK)	English	Meaning by word	Pronunciation
<i>Ragov na hwilewgh oela</i>	<i>Seek not to weep for me</i>	Ragov = For me Na = do not Hwilewgh = look for* Oela = weep	Rag- /- off ("Napkin") Hwil- ("Wee") / -le- ("Leg") / -w- (like "Whirr" but short) / -gh ("Loch") Oe- ("Toe") / -la ("Lads")
<i>Ha ganso kyn fes tewlys</i>	<i>Though you are cast down</i>	Ha = and Ganso = by him Kyn = although Fes = [unknown] Tewlys = cast (down)	("Happy") Gan- / - zo ("Kin") ("Confess") Te- ("Telly") / -wyls ("Wills")
<i>Ow ri ty a vynn dre dha vay a reth mar hweg</i>	<i>By your kiss, so sweetly given†</i>	Ow = [-ing suffix] Ri = bestow Ty = thee Vynn = want* Dre = because Dha = thine Vay = [unknown] Re'th = by your Mar = as / doubt Hweg = agreeable	("Grow") ("Reed") ("Tea") ("Vindicate") ("dreck") ("That") ("Duvet") (Rhymes with "Beth") Ma- ("Mattress") / -r (rolled) ("W" + "Egg")
<i>Fest yn tynn hi a oela</i>	<i>She wept very bitterly</i>	Fest = very / exceedingly Yn tynn = bitterly Hi = she Oela = weep	As in English ("In tin") ("Heat") Oe- ("toe") / -la ("Lads")
<i>Payn a'n jeva, angus tynn ha galarow</i>	<i>Pain, cruel anguish and suffering</i>	Payn = pain A'n jeva = it had / it got Angus = agony Tynn = bitter Galarow = afflictions	("Pain") A'n ("An") / Jeva ("Jam" + "ever") ("An" + "Goose") ("Tin") Gala- ("Galaxy") / -row (as in "row your boat")
<i>Ha'y dagrow a dhevera a'y dewlagas pur dhehwans</i>	<i>The tears flowed freely from her eyes</i>	Ha'y = and her Dagrow a dhevera = tears flowing A'y = from her Dewlagas = both eyes Pur dhehwans = very freely	("Eye") ("Dad" + "Grow") / dhe- ("Their") / -vera ("Severance") ("Eye") Dew- ("Deus" – Latin) / -lagas ("Lads" + "Gas") Pur (as in "cat Purrs") / dhe- ("Their") / -hwans (silent H)
<i>Dowr ha goes yn kemmyskys</i>	<i>Blood and water mixed together</i>	Dowr = river Goes = blood Yn = as Kemmyskys = mixed	("Dough" + "Err") ("Goose") ("In") Kemmys- ("Chemistry") / -kys ("kiss")
<i>Ha'y holonn hweg a ranna my a lever, rag tristans</i>	<i>Her sweet heart would have broken for sadness†</i>	H'ay = and her Holonn = heart Hweg = agreeable Ranna = assign Lever = says Rag = against Tristans = sadness	("Eye") ("Whore" + "Long") ("W" + "Egg") ("Ran" + "Aardvark") ("L" + "Never" + rolled R) As in English ("Tryst" + "Anne's")
<i>Yn kettella an nansow hwi a bys rag 'gas kudha</i>	<i>As you will beg the valleys to cover you</i>	Kettella = just as Nansow = valleys Hwi = all y'all Bys = as far as Rag = against 'gas = you Kudha = conceal	("Kett"le + "Acapella") Nan- (as in Grandma) / -s – ("Z") / -ow ("Grow") ("Wee") ("Biscuit") As in English As in English Ku – (like "Tu" in French) / -dha ("That")
<i>Delirv vy</i>	<i>Deliver me</i>	Delirv = liberate Vy = me	Like "Deliver", but with a rolled R ("Vee")
<i>Yntra dhe dhiwla</i>	<i>Into your hands</i>	Yntra = among / between Dhe = at Dhiwla = hands	("Intravenous") ("Then") Dhi- ("Think") / -w- (like "Whirr" but short) / -la ("Lads")
<i>An karadow</i>	<i>The beloved</i>	Karadow = beloved / dear one	Kara- ("Caraway" with rolled R) / -dow ("Dough")

* Direct translation unconfirmed

† Original translation employs poetic licence

Passhyon Agan Arloedh

Music by Hugo Bell, 2026
Anonymous 14th Century Cornish Text

♩ = 80, weightlessly flowing

The musical score is written for Soprano, Mezzo Soprano, Violin 1, Violin 2, Manuals, and Pedals. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 80, weightlessly flowing.

Vocal Parts:

- Soprano:** *ppp* < *poco* *pp* *ppp* *ppp* *sim.*
Seek not to weep for me By your kiss
- Mezzo Soprano:** *ppp* < *poco* *pp* *ppp*
though you are cast down

Violin 1 and Violin 2: *pppp*
molto sul tasto, senza vibrato, rebowing ad. lib.
incredibly light, whispering

Manuals: *ppp*

Pedals: (No notes)

Organ Pedalboard:

- Swell: S.D 8' + O.D 8'
- Great: S.D 8' partially drawn to 65mm (see notes)
- Ped: Bourdon 16'
- Swell to Pedal
- Swell box fully closed

9

S. *pp* *ppp* *pp*
 so sweet - ly gi- ven though you are cast

M-S. *ppp* *sim.* *pp* *ppp*
 seek not to weep for me

Vln. 1 *pp* *détaché, viol-esque*

Vln. 2 *pp*

Man. 0% 25%

Ped.

16

S. *p* *pp* *p poco piu forte* *mp*
 down Ra- gov na hwi- lewgh oe -

M-S. *p* *mp* *p poco piu forte*
 by your kiss so sweet- ly giv- en ha gan-so

Vln. 1 *détaché, viol-esque*

Vln. 2 *détaché, viol-esque*

Man. *pp* *Gt.*

Ped. *ppp*

23

S. *p* *mp* *pp*
 la ow ri ty a vynn

M-S. *mp* *p* *mp*
 kyn fes te- wyls dre dha vay a reth mar hweg

Vln. 1 *mp* *ppp*

Vln. 2 *mp* *ppp*

Man. 0% (Sw. box closed)

Ped.

30

S. *sub. ppp distant, echo* 3 3 3
 Hi a oe - la fest yn tynn payn an

M-S. *espressivo p* *ppp* *p* *p* *ppp*
 she wept ve-ry bit- ter - ly pain cruel an -

Vln. 1 *p* *n*
sul pont.

Vln. 2 *p* *n*
sul pont.

Man. *ppp* box closed
 Sw: 2' only *8va---*

Ped. Ped: -Sw to Ped

35

S. *p*
 - gus ga - la - row da-grow a dhe ve

M-S. *mp* > *pp* *mp* *pp*
 - guish and suf-fer - ing the tears flowed

Vln. 1 *p* *n* *p* *mp* *p* *n* *p*
 pizz. ord. sul pont.

Vln. 2 *p* *n* *p* *mp* *p* *n* *p*
 pizz. sul tasto sul pont.

Man. *8va*-7 Gt. *8va*-7
 semi-pitched air sound *ppp*

Ped.

41

S. *ppp*
 - ra de - w - la-gas pur dhe-hwans do- wr ha

M-S. *mp* *pp* *mp*
 free-ly from her eyes blood and wa-ter

Vln. 1 *ppp* *mp* *ppp* *8va*-7 arco loco, sul pont.

Vln. 2 *ppp* *mp* *ppp* *8va*-7 arco loco, sul pont.

Man.

Ped.

46

S. *p* *ppp* *p* *ppp*
 goes yn kem - mys - kys ha'y ho- lonn rag

M-S. *sub. ppp* *mp* *pp* *mp* *pp* *mp*
 mixed to - ge-ther her sweet heart would have bro-ken for

Vln. 1 *n* *mp* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pppp* *sul tasto*

Vln. 2 *n* *mp* *n* *mp* *pp* *n* *mp* *sul pont.*

Man. Sw. *8va* Gt. *8va*

Ped.

52

S. tri - - - stans tri - - - stans

M-S. *sub. ppp distant*
 sad - - - ness sad - - -

Vln. 1 *ppp* *n* *pp* *ppp* *sim.*
sul tasto, slow & wide pitch 'wobble'

Vln. 2 *pp* *ppp* *n* *ppp*
sul tasto, slow & wide pitch 'wobble'

Man. Gt. *8va*
Gt. sim., semi-pitched air sound ppp

Ped.

57

S. tri - - stans tri - stans

M-S. - ness sad - - ness And

Vln. 1 *ppp* *n* *pp*

Vln. 2 *n* *pp* *ppp* *sim.* *n* *ppp*

Man. *8va*

Ped.

62

S. yn ket-tel - la an nan - sow hwi a

M-S. beg the val - leys to co - ver

Vln. 1 *ppp* *n* *mp* *ppp* *mp*
sul tasto. flautando (non glissando)

Vln. 2 (sul tasto) *mp* *ppp* *mp* *ppp*
sul pont.

Man.

Ped.

77

S. li - - ver me in - to your

pp subtly emerging

M-S. de - li - - ver me in - to

Vln. 1 sul tasto sempre
sempre *ppp*

Vln. 2 sul tasto sempre
sempre *ppp*

Man. *ppp* box closed
Swell: S.D 8' + O.D 8' only, box 0%

Ped.

83

S. hands de - liry vy yn -

M-S. your hands de - liry vy

Vln. 1 slow & wide pitch 'wobble' as before
(still *ppp*)

Vln. 2

Man.

Ped.

101

S. *pppp*
The Be - lov - ed

M-S. *pppp*
dow An Ka - ra dow

Vln. 1
ppp *n* *n* *ppp* *n*

Vln. 2
n *n* *ppp* *n*

Man.

Ped.